



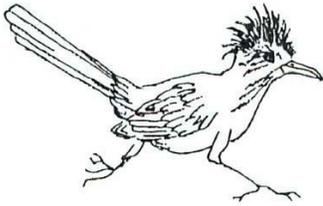
VIP2VIP



Season 2, Volume 2

Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter

January 13, 2003



Persimmon Gap

Mark Kirtley- Visitor Center

Joan and Jack Lamkin- Visitor Center

Castolon

LeRoy and Carolyn Kellar- Interpretation

Carol Hines- Interpretation

Samantha Schroeder and Whit Hibbard- Camp Hosts and Backcountry

Rio Grande Village

Hal & Margaret Waters- Visitor Center

Wayne Strelve & Jennifer Dyer- Visitor Center

Barbara and Bill Baldwin- Camp Hosts

Royann and Royce Brockett- Camp Hosts

Erv and Sam Drabek- Backcountry

Basin

Ginny and Jim Herrick- Visitor Center

Dana and Les Over- Camp Hosts

Suzanne Cable- Backcountry

SCA's

Diane Stout- PJ Interpretation

Robin Liu- PJ Interpretation

Holly Alois- PJ Interpretation

Maria Lavender- PJ Interpretation

River District

Steve McAllister- Backcountry

Carol and Bob Huber- Backcountry

Panther Junction

Becky Reiger- Volunteer Coordinator Assistant

Fran and Bernie Heyman- Interpretation

Bud Frankenberger- Resource Management

Jessica Sherwood- Fire Management



Volunteers enthusiastically greeted park visitors on the first day of the New Year. Joan & Jack Lamkin at Persimmon Gap, and Diane Stout & Robin Liu at PJ enjoyed working in the busy visitor centers.

NEW YEARS



DAY 2003



To Start A New Year. Anonymous
"A new year is unfolding—like a blossom with petals curled tightly concealing the beauty within."



The December Potluck dinner was a huge success! No one went away hungry. After dinner we got to know one another better by collecting rocks and playing "I Never Did That".



2002 Annual Holiday Dinner



Backcountry volunteers, Sam & Erv Drabek, share stories with River District's Bob Huber.



Bob & Carol Schemm



This year's Holiday Dinner provided an excellent opportunity to visit with friends from previous years.



While Santa was listening to the children's wish lists, park volunteers enjoyed sharing the excitement of the Season with one another. After social hour, everyone filled their plates with the delicious Turkey dinner. Some stayed for the dancing later in the

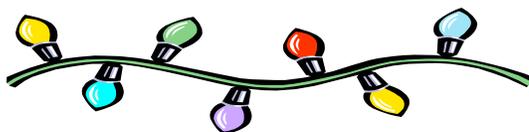
New Volunteer, Suzanne Cable, visits with Margaret & Hal Waters.



Ginny & Jim Herrick's time decorating and setting up was greatly appreciated!



SCA Maria Lavender enjoys coffee with dessert!



Volunteer Corner

Samantha Schroeder & Whit Hibbard



Big Bend National Park offers great opportunities for new knowledge and skills to Castolon Camp Hosts and Backcountry Volunteers, Samantha Schroeder & Whitney Hibbard. In their jobs they are able to utilize the park's horses, bicycles, canoes, and the jeep, Kokopelli. Their time is spent in varied ways, including checking the signage on trails, cleaning up and delineating campsites, checking permits, and making contact with visitors. They are particularly excited to be involved in the ongoing Search and Rescue training. Although they have not had to use it yet, they have been outfitted as first responders with hasty packs. Both Samantha and Whit enjoy helping with all the tasks their supervisor, Kathi Hambly, has assigned to them.



Last March and April, Samantha & Whit worked as caretakers at the Key's Homestead in the Desert Queen Ranch in Joshua Tree National Park. Although not involved in the Ranger's guided tours, they did monitor the photographers that came

to this often-photographed site. Since they enjoyed the remote location, they have agreed to return there to work after they leave Big Bend in February.

Whit grew up on a ranch in Montana. After schooling, he utilized his master's degree in counseling with the criminal justice system for 8 years. He then returned to work on the family ranch. Samantha also grew up on a Montana ranch. She earned a degree in education for biological science and home economics. For 5 years, she ran an interior decorating shop. After meeting Whit almost 20 years ago, she joined him working on the family's ranch. They are both very accomplished in Aikido, and owned a school for 15 years. Whit holds a 3rd degree black belt, and Samantha a 2nd degree black belt.



Eventually, they grew tired of the Montana winters. They traded their 3000 square foot house for their 300 square foot 5th wheel, which they call their "Mobile Cow Camp". They work on the family ranch in the summer and fall, selling the yearling cattle. After the cattle are sold, they are free to head south for the winter. The first year found them boondocking in southern California and Arizona. After hearing about the VIP program, they realized it could be the ideal situation. They are able to utilize their skills, while learning new ones. In addition, they offer a valuable service to national parks.

Big Bend is definitely growing on them. They like the park and the people. There is always time to enjoy the spectacular sunrises and sunsets. The Santa Elena District is fortunate to have these two dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers!

Costumed Interpretation

Hal and Margaret Waters are currently working at their 11th park, educating visitors with their entertaining programs. While sitting in lawn chairs around Daniels Ranch Picnic area, visitors are taken back in time, listening to the Waters' first person portrayals of local characters in Big Bend's history.



Margaret and Hal have been developing their interpretive skills at 11 different national parks. Their first park was Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas. They continued their experience in interpretation at Carlsbad Caverns the following year. While in Death Valley National Park, they were offered the opportunity to train in first person interpretation. Their first opportunity to begin developing

different characters was at Fort Scott NHS, Kansas. Hal drew on his medical background while enacting the role of a Civil War surgeon, while Margaret depicted a settler's wife. In Redwood National Park, Margaret was able to enjoy a beautiful view of the Pacific Ocean from the visitor center's window, while Hal exercised and took care of the horses.



Margaret's costumed interpretation was accompanied by Hal's portrayal of a mountain man during a stay at Bents Old Fort NHS, Colorado. Their next park, Pipe Spring National Monument, AZ, is the only park they have worked in twice. In Theodore Roosevelt NP, Margaret created the character of a pioneer woman which complimented Hal's ranch foreman for the Roosevelt Ranch. Their latest volunteer opportunity before Big Bend was at Grant-Khors Ranch NHS in Montana, an actual operating cattle ranch. Hal was able to re-enact the role of Johnny Bielenberg, one of the 2 brothers that owned the ranch.



Margaret was given the ultimate compliment from a visitor when he commented, "I never realized Mrs. Khors had so much influence."

This is their first visit to Big Bend. They use their past experiences and the resources at the park to develop the

characters they want to portray in their new programs. Hal has learned to capture starter from local kitchens to bake sour-dough bread during some of his performances. Their goal is for the park's history to come alive for visitors.

This lifestyle keeps them healthy, active, and engaged in learning everything they can about different areas of this country. Spending several months in one area gives them the time to really get to know the place. They have

learned that just traveling in their RV doesn't ensure that they will feel at home in an area. Hal and Margaret feel the strong desire to become immersed in the history and share themselves with others by volunteering. When asked by park visitors about the volunteering experience, Hal says "Try it. You'll like it!"

When they leave Big Bend this spring they will continue their costumed interpretation at the LBJ Ranch in Johnson City, TX. Hal and Margaret have certainly developed a unique and entertaining way to educate park visitors about the realities of living in

Hal and Margaret met in Washington State 50 years ago. In 1995, they told their three children they were giving them the finest gift they could ever receive. They saved their children the trouble of going through all their belongings by organizing and labeling their pictures, and giving away or selling un-needed items. As difficult as it was, Margaret was able to organize and move them into their motorhome, allowing them to begin their journey as full-time RVer's.

Traveling was not a new thing for them. Hal worked for the Department of Agriculture for 30 years as a veterinarian. It gave him the opportunity to travel extensively overseas. Once their children were all in college, Margaret was able to pursue her desire to explore new places by becoming a travel agent. Between the two of them, they have visited every continent except Antarctica! When asked where their favorite place to travel is, Hal quickly answers, "the next one!"



CPR/AED/First Aid Training



San Vicente School provided space for the two training sessions on Dec. 4th and 11th. Linda Brindle facilitated both sessions assisted by Angelina Yost & Gail Fox.



Volunteers successfully completed the American Heart Association's Heartsaver Facts Program.



In a remote setting like Big Bend, it is essential that people working here be prepared for an emergency. Hopefully, these skills will never be used.

Big Bend Love Affair

by Bud Frankenberger

On Thanksgiving morning of 1962, I awoke for the first time in the Basin campground, pulled myself out of a sleeping bag, and uttered one three-letter word, "ZOW!" For a college freshman of that era, "zow" had roughly the same unintelligible meaning as the word "awesome" has today. It was an utterance intended to express pure amazement. Since that first awesome "zow," I've never been quite the same.



For the past 40 years, I have visited the park, on average, about 3 times a year, fall-winter-spring. In 1982, to celebrate my 20th anniversary (and finally to see a summer in Big Bend), I served as a VIP for 7 weeks in July and August. I lived in a tent in the Basin while working for Interpretation. It was the first, and only, time I've seen the "rainy season" and experienced the extremes of desert heat.

In 1971, when we had our first child, I wanted to name her "Dagger Flats." However my wife's good sense prevailed. Our second child, a son who is now 21, was conceived in the Basin campground during a very cold Thanksgiving camping trip. (We had already done everything else possible to stay warm). We could not resist giving him the middle name, "Emory." As you can see, although my family is not with me during this VIP term, they also feel a kinship with Big Bend. I'm sure this kinship is equally shared by each of you.

Currently, I am sharing my love for Big Bend by working for Science and Resource Management. I work in the North Rosillos where feral hogs entered the park several years ago. My duties include: examining old stock tanks for "hog sign" (tracks, scat, wallows, etc.), taking GPS readings at spring locations, noting invasive plant locations, and mapping plastic tubing (for eventual removal) from the ranching era that runs from springs to watering troughs. Such off-trail hiking in this remote section of the park suits me well, and hopefully provides useful data for management considerations.



Big Bend has been, and remains, an important part of my life. It is the place where I first learned the humility of being mortal. I could measure my limited days in human form against the more permanent backdrop of mountains and canyons that seem enduring. It is the place where my abstract and innermost thoughts seem to combine easily with a concrete and outermost reality. It is a place where one seems to learn the most by saying or speaking the least. Its messages are quiet, fulfilling, and complete.



Like most of you, I have visited a number of other national parks. But this one is "home." For some reason, that old "Zow!" on the first morning just never quits. I can't seem to outgrow my love affair with Big Bend, even after 40 years.

As the New Year dawns, take time for peaceful reflection. Close your eyes and see your dreams coming true.
Flania

Activities & Events

Bible Study- "What's so amazing about Grace?", a 4 week series in PJ community room, 8:30-9:30 pm, Jan 19, 26 & Feb 2, 9.

Combat Buffelgrass Meeting- Jan. 22, 7:00 pm, Study Butte Community Center

Benefit Dinner- Scottie Trunsell's ear surgery, Jan.30, 6:30 pm PJ Community Room, \$5 for enchilada dinner.

Book Club- "Cutting for Sign", Feb 9, 6:00pm, PJ site MH12 (Bernie & Fran's).

Ongoing:

Sunday Worship Service- 10:00 am at Chisos Basin Amphitheater, 4:30 pm at RGV Amphitheater, 7:30 pm at PJ Community Room.

Yoga - Alternate Monday's, Jan. 27 & Feb. 10, San Vicente school gym, 6:30-7:30 pm, \$10/ session

Free Yoga - Jan. 25, PJ Community Room, 9:30-11:00 am, Bring your mat

Crafts - Every Monday, PJ Community Room, 7:00 pm

Cookbook Sales - *A Taste of Big Bend, Potluck Favorites*

Check the Bulletin Board at PJ for Details and Updates!

Volunteer Notes

- ◆ Be sure to contact Angelina or Becky ONE WEEK before you leave for reimbursement checks and other paperwork.
- ◆ If you're planning to return next year, please remember to bring your sun hat with you!
- ◆ Be sure to check out the VIP newsletter on our website: www.nps.gov/bibie/vip.htm